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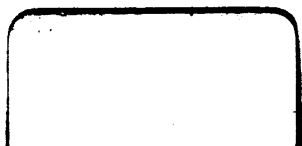
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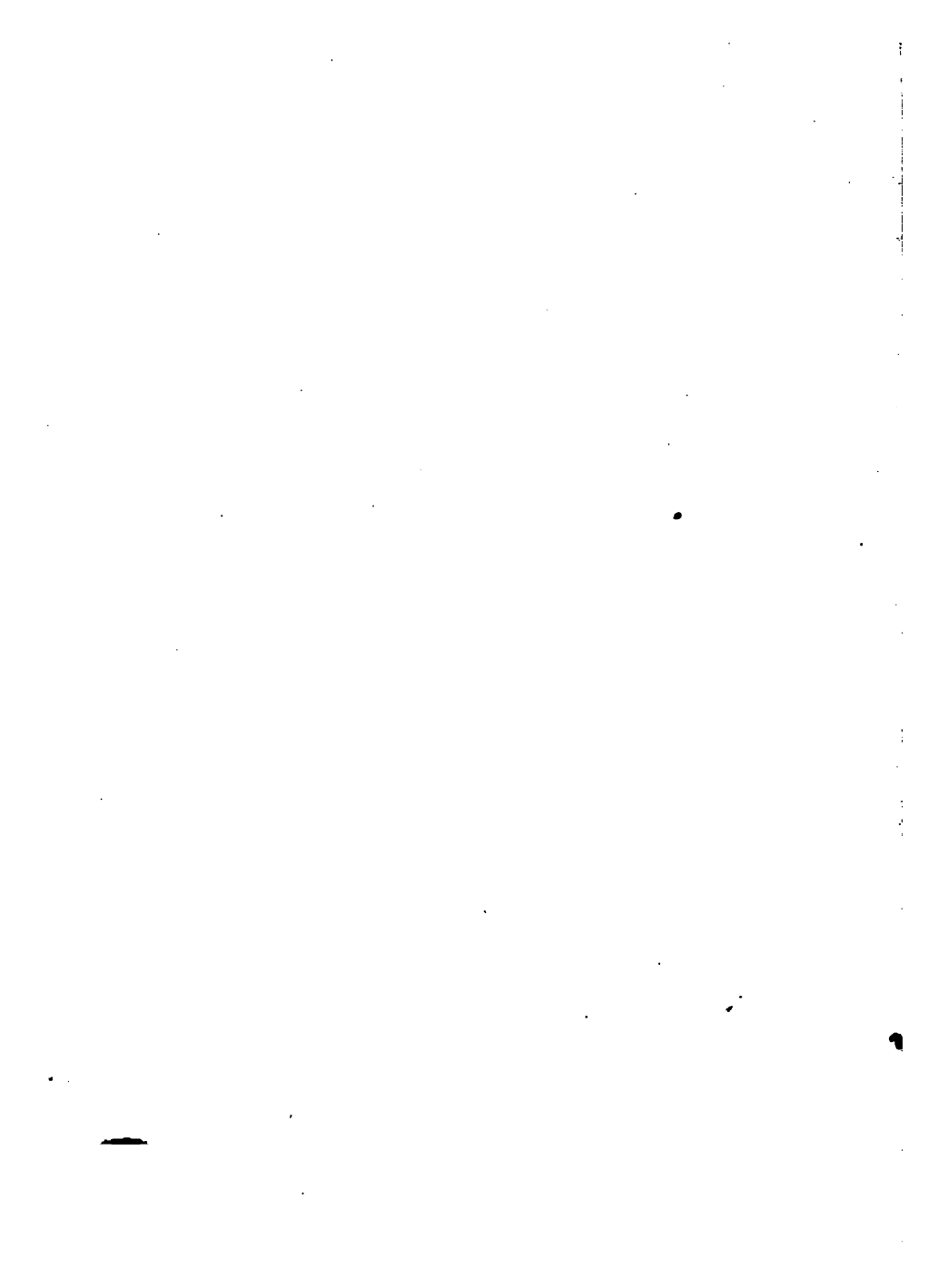
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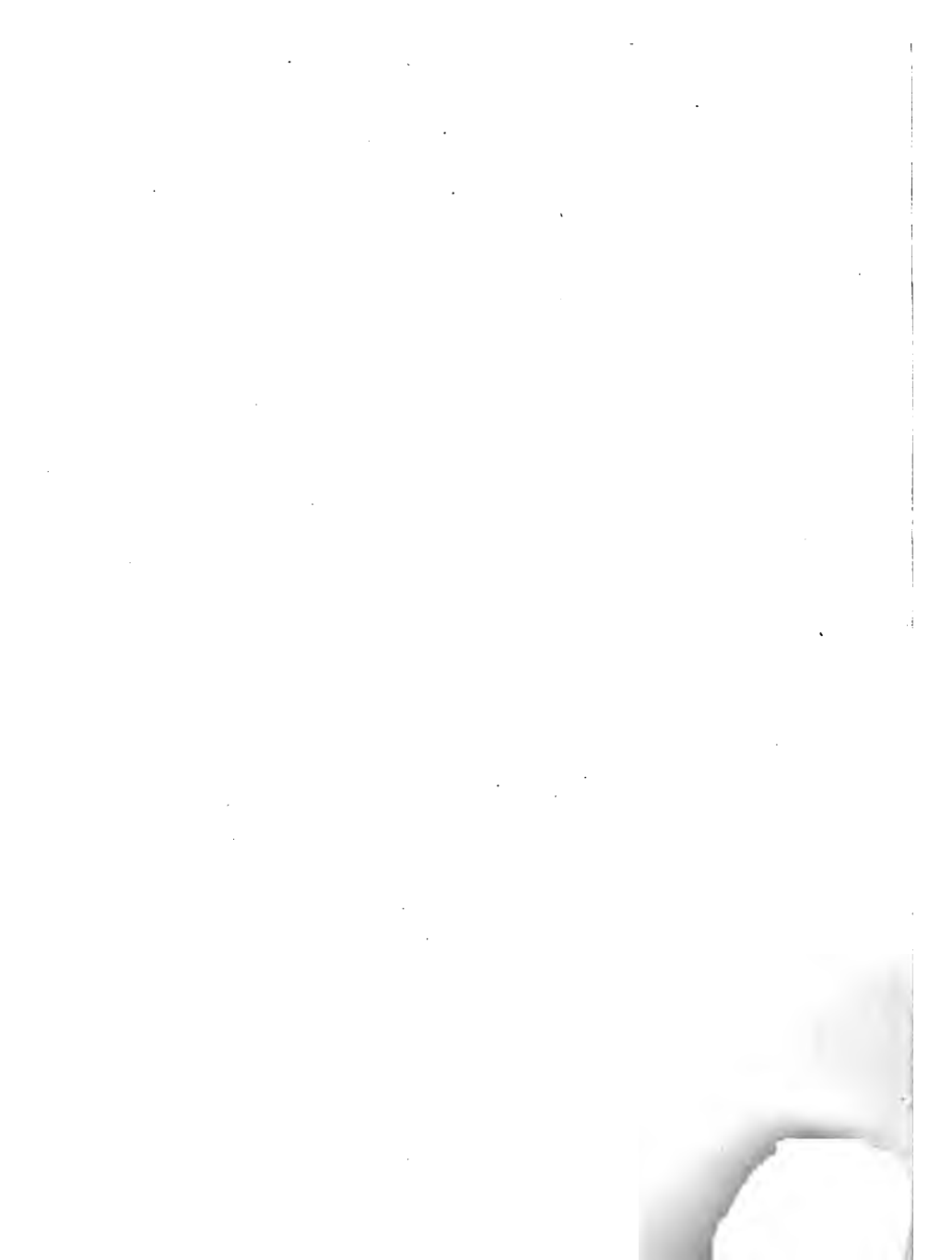
I sincerely wish that all
the blessings of this Season of
rejoicing may be yours.

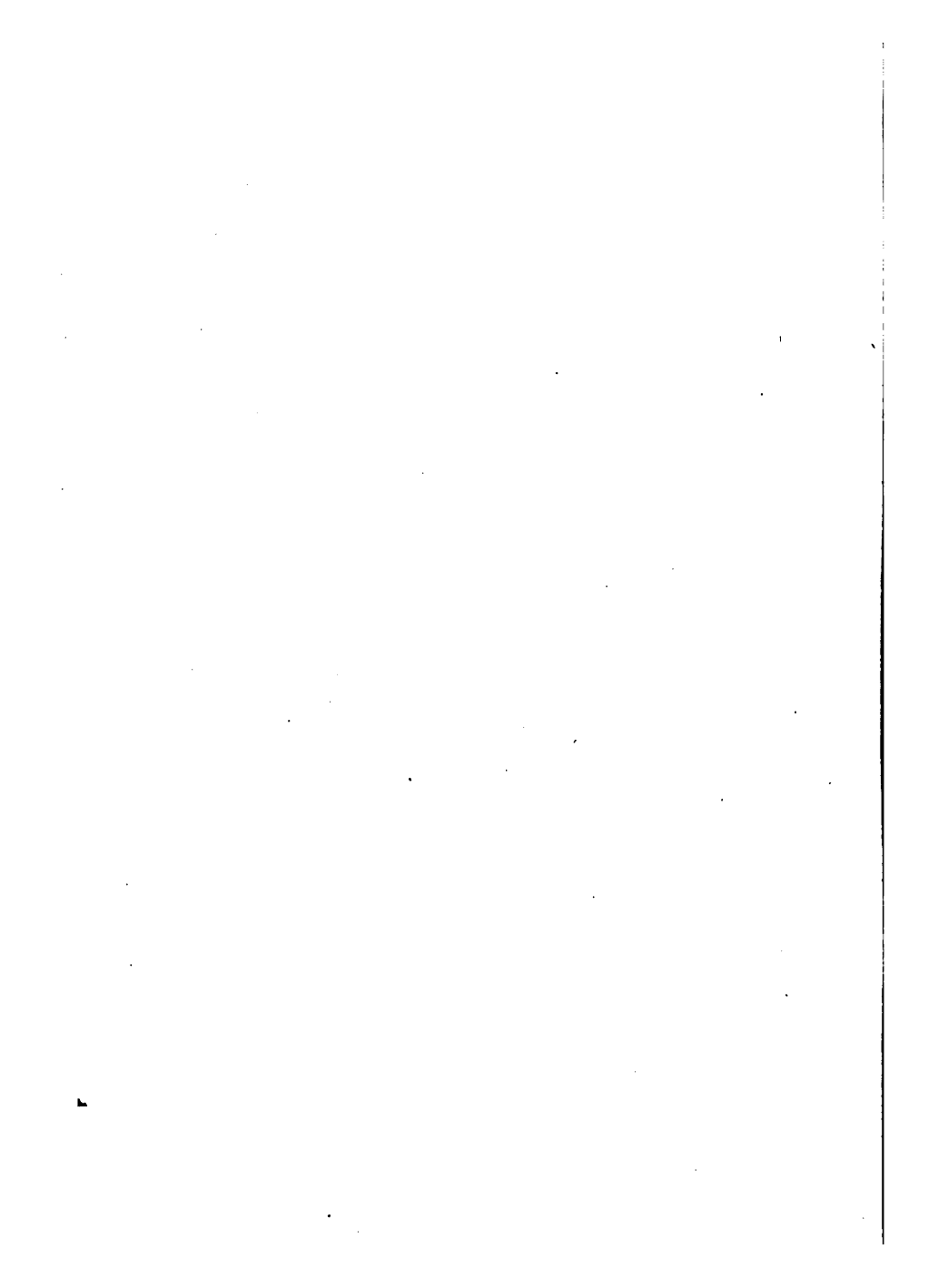
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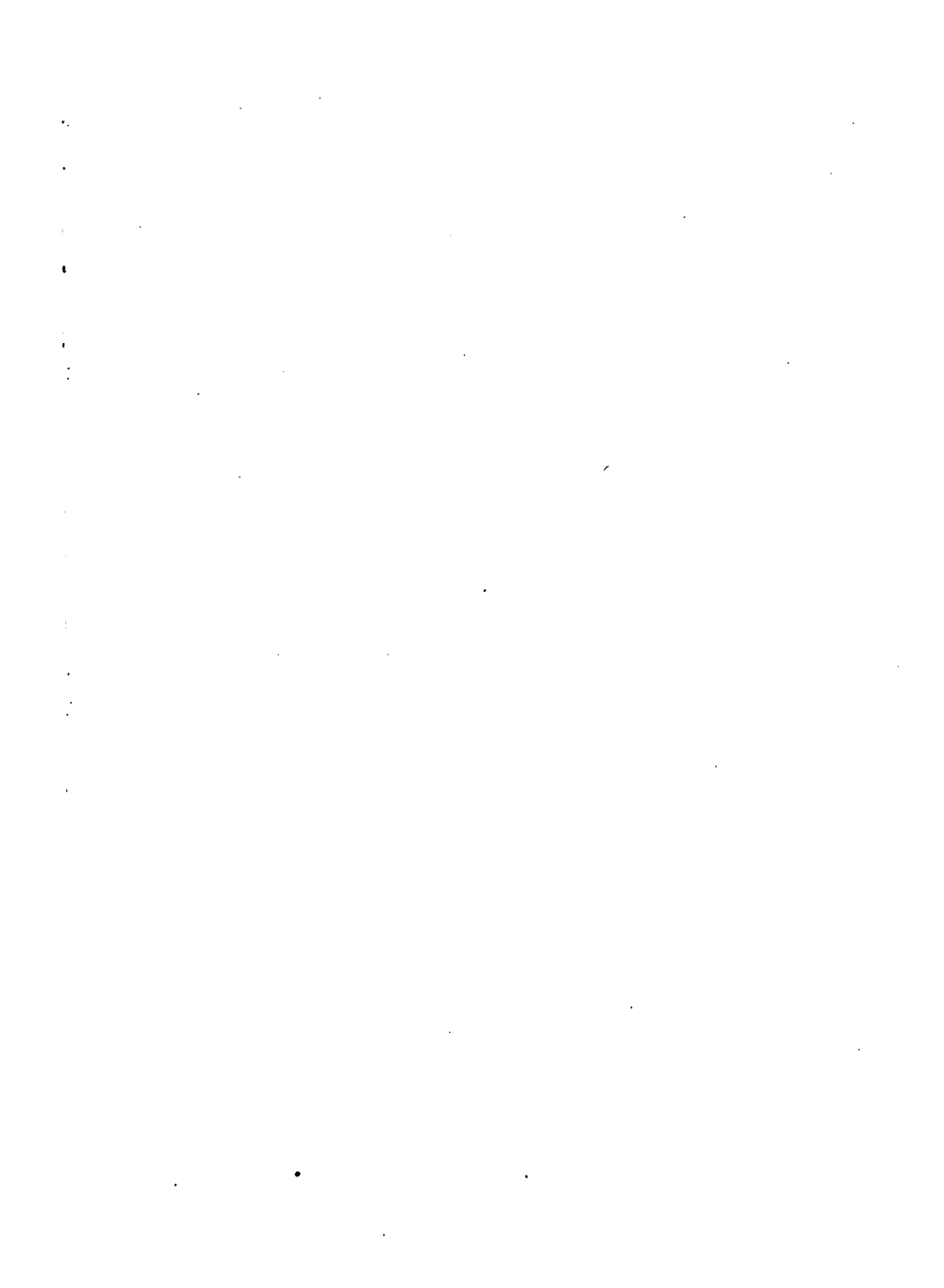
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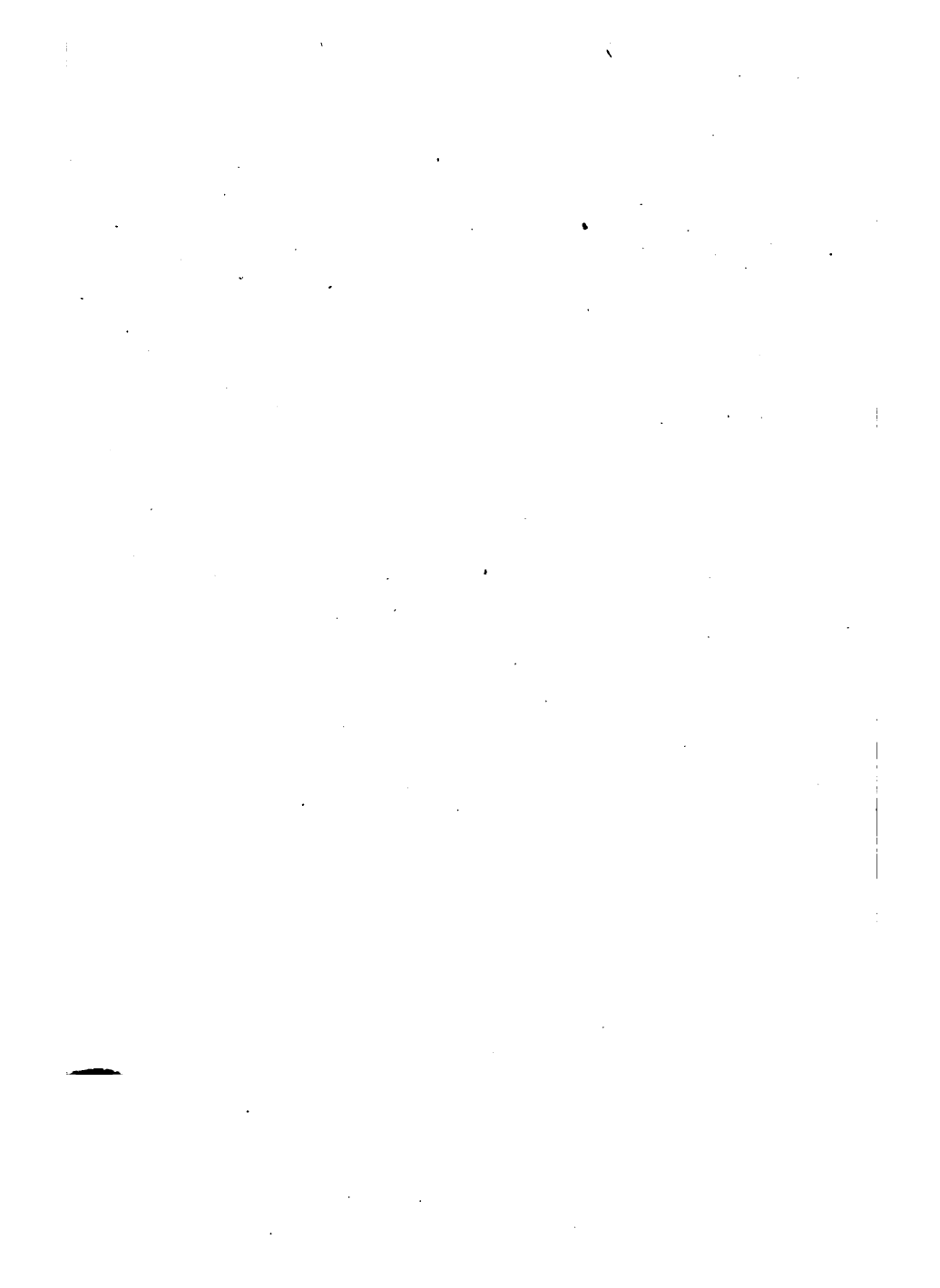
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ALEXANDER D. PENFOLD

HOME OF THE CAUSE

ALEXANDER

The Case, *Locke v. Carter*



ALEXANDER D. PENFOLD

HOME OF THE GODS

By ^M
ALEXANDER D. PENFOLD
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ms



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Home of the Gods.

So covered with the moss of time
That hazy thoughts quite balk the mind,
When sires of the Dewart name
First aspired to healing fame,

But doctors they have been of yore
Down to our Sandy's mystic score;
Who'd reached the hour when he could see
The proud appendix of M. D.

His alma mater's master eye
Had scrolled his vellum with India's dye;
He'd only to stretch forth his hand,
To blaze his shingle in the land.

But choicest fruit upon a tree
Is often what we fail to see;
We pluck instead the very worst,
For which Dame Luck is always cursed.

Dewart *père* with a cheering crowd
Had gathered to make his offspring proud,
Within the famous hall of old
Where honor-wreaths are won untold.

With eager eyes these kind friends looked
Among the sons for honors booked,
But Sandy's face they did not see:
Where could the coming doctor be?

Cold silence answered to the call,
When Dewart's name rang through the hall;
The cloud upon the parent's face
Was sadness, tempered with disgrace.

HOME OF THE GODS.

A search from Mull to Dunnet Head
Found no Sandy alive or dead.
He'd vanished out of mortal sight;
No human eye had seen his flight.

Had th' bright waters of her lakes
Entombed this son of the land o' cakes?
Or had some treacherous mountain cave
Opened its mouth to make his grave?

A wayward thought or freakish trend
In Aleck was spurned by foe and friend.
The only ray on cloud so dense
Was love for Eastern lore *intense*.

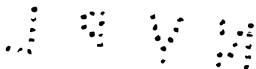
Could this bent for a hoary fad
Have driven this youthful student mad?
For weeks and months the mystery slept,
While his friends a ceaseless vigil kept.

When time each gleam of hope had spent,
To this group of bleeding hearts was sent
A stream of light bright as mid-day,
In a poem from far-off Bombay.

As a Scot my birth was out of place, and equally out of date.
My heart throbbed for another race, and my life for another fate.
With native heathered hills aglow with shades and colors galore,
A quenchless thirst with time would grow for mystic Eastern lore.

'Twas in my dreams through night's still hours and my thoughts
through the garish day;
I cared not for fragrant flowers, nor the boyish games of play.
Even Horace with his ancient voice, and Virgil pure and sweet
Only enhanced my craving choice to seek my idol's feet.

The humdrum of a doctor's life, or the surgeon's doubtful skill—
I spurned alike the cruel knife, and the delusive pill.
So against the wish of family pride, and a father's honest aim
I left my Scottish fireside and to these Indies came.



Here th' rugged glare of life was turned upon the dreams of Night,
And from the world's school I learned to judge mankind aright.
The romance of the Orient, like a turtle on its back,
Reversed my thoughts, to my lament, and dealt conceit a whack.

'Tis true my fairy Vedic land, in beauty, shames my dreams,
But at its size, aghast I stand; to me a world it seems.
I thought to climb its mountain wall and from the topmost peak
To watch Ganges and Indus fall into the waters deep;

Then with a sweep of vision wide, toward the Southern seas,
To view Ceylon, the Orient's pride, the isle of fragrant trees.
My meter-chart was out of gear, 'twas gauged by Scotia's chain,
Where I could, from Ben Nevis' ear, scan all from main to main.

Wee Scotland, with her tiny brood, withal a giant's might,
Inspired my heart, as with pride I stood, that stilled a coward's fright,
Appalled at scores of petty thrones, instead of a single mind,
To rule India with her complex zones; and medley of human kind.

I'd pictured hosts of the saintly class, as in the Vedas taught,
Pouring through the snow mountain pass when great battles must be
fought,
The Aryan with his golden hair, and mien of a god,
To assail the native in his lair, and use the conqueror's rod.

These ancient foes I still could see, in Veda's musty pages,
One to defend, and still be free from those invading sages.
Instead I find more scattered breeds than the average mind can grasp,
With scores of tongues and mystic creeds which make the wisest gasp.

The Vedic hymns in primal scrip, which early won my heart,
Have by time and wicked hands been stripped of every vital part.
Even the Brahman, astute of brain, who loves his father's shrines,
Sadly admits the evil stain upon those holy lines.

The atma of the triad, the heart of the sacred roll,
Which in current life hath little part the true ones to console,
'Tis buried beneath a mass of creeds, like Ganesa and its kind,
For the people crave the poison-seeds, and not the Godlike mind.

The pundits of the hoary past, by their magic skill,
Over the Vedic truths have cast their blighting spells that kill.
To Brahm, the Jehovah of the Jew, the one who's over all,
They've added a hundred gods anew — inviting certain fall.

Gauging the power of the supreme by what man may know,
They've dared to aid Him in his scheme to rule heaven and all below.
There's a god of the torrid Sun — his breath the lightning's flash —
A symbol of the flaming spot, in which doomed sinners gnash.

'Tis strange this Sun, with all his might, must for a helper search,
Who invokes Ushas for infant light before he warms the Earth.
Then add the Soma of the moon, whose holy juice inspires
The taster with a heavenly boon around the sacred fires.

They've too a god of clouds and rain, who makes them wet or dry,
The one a blessing to parched plain, the other a mocking sky.
But Varuna of the raging wave they cannot well disdain,
Whose affrighting figure is to save the toilers of the main.

If the people of this sordid world would own their love of self,
For Kuvera they would their flags unfurl — the Indian god of wealth.
'Tis said this land so full of gold was th' site of Solomon's mines,
From whence this famous king of old bejeweled his concubines.

Next in line would Kama fall, whose love for the unchaste,
Would by his sensual flaunts win all of his lewd evil taste.
There's too the sacred bulls and trees, and the hallowed creeping thing,
Whose worship doth strange hearts appease without a chiding sting.

There are gods of caves, and gods of earth, and of perennial snow; —
Gods so many that words grow dearth to name them as we go.
Thus with a picture robbed of all, once seen within its frame,
Your wayward son has met a fall unworthy of his name.

There's no single figure upon the scene, my ardent hopes to greet,
While many strangers there are seen that pain me much to meet.
Though depressed and sore at heart, defeat I spurn with pride,
So of the army's med's I'm part, and a student too beside.

In my bungalow I mix my drugs, and my Sanskrit text devour,
While my guests are snakes and stinging bugs up to fair dawn's wee
hour.

My jovial friend by day or night is Tippoo of ready speech,
If I shout aloud, and a stinger smite, he rebukes me by a screech.

To this feathered chum, in gaudy dress, I owe a heavy debt,
As friend to cheer me in distress he's never failed me yet.
Oft quite afar from human ear I read Sanskrit aloud,
Which Tippoo shouts so shrill and clear that his learning makes me
proud.

But Tippoo's gifts are none of mine, nor are they of recent growth,
For years quite close to a Hindoo shrine he acquired a classic mouth.
So whene'er by chance, a line's misread, or I an error make,
This bird will promptly check my speed by quoting my mistake.

No better teacher can be found than Tippoo at his best,
Like his sainted lord long under ground, at Meru safe at rest.
But now the Sepoys' mongrel gods, and tongues of nameless sounds,
Must brave this Tippoo's caustic prods, with which our tent resounds.

Although these slurs, so deftly thrust, amused my dearest friend,
They angered, as I knew they must, those I should least offend.
For these *browns* are reckoned a mighty host—a factor in the East
Of which old Britain is proud to boast, as the anchor of her peace.

Come! Come! said I to saucy Tip, as I called this bird for short,
Don't be so free with the critic's lip, or my office you'll abort.
Poor Tippoo bowed his head in shame—like a sage forlorn—
And from that hour no Sepoy's name was target of his scorn.

This quite undreamed of wisdom, in a head so very small,
Called forth my admiration for this wise Indian Poll.
Though watchman of this shifting tent, where're its home might be
I would not from my aim relent to keep him close to me.

My mild rebuke wrought instant change—Tippoo's tongue was tied,
Would he my friendship thus estrange, to avenge his wounded pride?
My humble suit I pled in vain, to win back his loyal heart,
Until by vows I made it plain we twain must never part.

When Tippoo's ire had been appeased, and his deep wound was healed,
As anxious friend I was more than pleased the victor's crown to yield.
"Good Anglo, why not go to Ben?"* were his words of coming peace,
A sentence he would freely quote when my troubled mind had ease.

From Benares was this parrot brought, and there he longed to be,
That holy city, as Veda taught, where the good may heaven see.
But if Tippoo loved his ancient home, and craved its sacred air,
'Twas in Anglo's youth his idol's throne, who by her gods did swear.

Tip long had worn the sage's crest, had he too the prophet's eye?
The camp tomorrow, filled with unrest, must to the Ganges hie,
When again we pitched our canvas home, and saw that river's flow,
We beheld alike Ben's* glittering domes, and her dazzling bright halo.

In ecstatic youth this hallowed place did not to earth belong,
But where in visions I saw the face of him of seraphic song;
A city built by hands unknown ere Abram saw the light,
And which had seeds of wisdom sown to cheer the sons of night.

Why had I thus so long delayed Ben's* holy gates to seek?
The answer is, be not dismayed, my empty purse could speak.
Must the reversals of my mind to Siva's throne apply?
Were fears of awe, quite undefined, when first it met my eye.

Her distant turrets charmed my sight and wooed to closer view,
So before Ben's streets were gloomed by night towards her gates I drew.
First my steps were soft and slow — with reverence I trod,
For fear that on earth below I might confront a god.

Once lost within her maze of stone, that barred the Sun's bright rays,
I halted and communed alone with thoughts of other days.
Could a dream indeed be half so real, or was I face to face
With common mortals who live and feel like any other race?

Through Ben's dark crooked paths I roamed till I had lost my way
Where cripples, without friends or home, in countless numbers lay.
The twinge of grief these sights awoke, my soul so o'ercame,
That the sad-eyed bull failed to provoke his share of pity's claim.

* Benares.

Once too revered for human hand to stroke his silken skin
This beast now mingles with the band of Brahma's loathed kin.
But Benares in her ancient dress is with rare beauty clad,
Which more than mantles all distress and atones for the poor and sad.

Her little narrow ways are filled with a busy, happy crowd,
Where work of the hand that's skilled would make an artist proud.
These gems displayed in the common mart I viewed with keen surprise
Excelled alone by antique art which met my puzzled eyes.

Designs unique and concepts rare adorned each narrow street
From roof to curb the artist's care did my rapt glances greet.
What is that far above my head smiling o'er the way?
'Tis the picture of a sage who died ere Jacob's natal day.

The figure that to this sage would speak across the dim divide,
Was hallowed Siva, so wise and stern, who would some truth confide.
Thus each wall in these dingy streets spoke with pristine pride
Through artists in their master feats that rivalry defied.

First elephant, then sacred ape, and bull more sacred still,
With flowers and gods in every shape that wd a volume fill.
I walked and walked with upturned head, till in the darkness mazed,
My eyes set fast on walls bright red, with mind less clear than dazed.

Though confidence was not renewed, nor former dreams refired,
These classic scenes which I had viewed, again my soul inspired.
Some secret voice I can't define, bid me my steps retrace,
When my eyes beheld a scene divine, which time cannot efface.

The artist was one ever new—an early Eastern dawn,
A picture tinged with pink and blue, as by a goddess drawn.
Upon Ben's crescent of lordly homes, which crown her holy hill,
There fell upon her spires and domes, a sight the heart to thrill.

Slowly the golden sun appeared, and drove shy dawn away,
And blue and pink soon disappeared, in dread of brazen day.
The actors in this fairy scene came forth the sun to greet,
Robed in colors from red to green they sought their idol's feet.

From their poojah at a favored shrine, they to the Ganges go,
To banish sin, by power divine, in the sacred water's flow.
Thousands plunge from the river's side, into the holy stream,
Towards the sun they toss the tide, in his bright rays to gleam.

And scores of other rites enact, to appease the gods they fear,
Not least the cleansing by contact of garments they must wear.
Thus sanctified and quite forgiven for all their past misdeeds,
This devoted host saw Brahma's heaven in ancient Hindoo creeds.

In groups the palatial steps* they climbed, from sacred Ganges' brink,
Each cluster to its set confined, as by a tyrant's link.
All Aryans of the Hindoo race, all fall at Siva's feet,
Yet by the supreme law of caste, as friends they dare not meet.

In this romantic group of tribes were many of rank and wealth,
What! none who'd won their gold by bribes, or by genteel stealth?
But, no matter where or how their gains had reached their groaning
purse,
These holy waters wd cleanse all stains, and cancel the threatened curse.

Soon as these mystic matins ceased, and the throng was lost to view,
The wily vendors alike decreased, and sought kindred pastures new.
I left this place with keen regret, for me it had a spell —
So strangely novel I can't forget, nor wd I the charm dispel.

I roamed about the deserted ghats, their grandeur to adore,
Where wealth and art together sat, as twins of chiseled lore.
Then glancing along the stone-clad quay, with its rows of unique shrines
Into the city I made my way, to delve in its classic mines.

Again when lost in a weird nook, tramping I knew not where,
I saw an ape snatch from a hook, with bold but gentle care,
A basket filled with choicest food — the best upon the stand —
While stoic-like the vendor stood, and did not raise a hand.

Quickly, I touched him on the arm, thinking that he was blind,
And shouted "Thief!" in stern alarm, and kicked the ape behind.
With injured air the ape looked on his smiter with surprise,
And through his sullen gaze of scorn, hate glistened in his eyes.

* The superb ghats at Benares.

The mien of that merchant's face I never can forget.
Though months have passed since it took place, that look confronts me
yet.

He raised his arms above his head, in attitude most wild,
As though about to strike me dead, yet his glance was like a child.

I had smitten Vishnu's sacred thing, a most polluting blow,
Committing thus a mortal sin no Hindoo could undo.
Meek gestures took the place of speech, to atone for this misdeed,
So upon my knees I did beseech, and with mute lips did plead.

With success my silent suit was crowned, and then I stole away,
While the startled vendor quickly found a temple wherein to pray.
With unsandalled feet I saw him go into the hallowed door
When a well-known voice cried *Anglo!* So often heard before.

Quicker than sight could seek the place from whence the greeting came
Tippoo's hard beak was on my face cooing my Indian name.
This friend began to harangue, in language most severe,
In words perplexing, as well as new, though his text and aim were clear.

From a lofty perch quite near by he'd watched my thoughtless act,
And in scolding tones was asking why I used not better tact.
His voice became so shrill and loud, and of such earnest bent,
That our steps were halted by the crowd to learn what Tippoo meant.

A curious Moslem dared to rest his hand upon his hood,
When angered Tippoo seized his crest, and shed some Moslem blood.
At length I stilled this noisy bird, and in quiet onward paced,
But with a mind so much disturbed my plans were all displaced.

When I had reached the crowded chok* my eyes were opened wide,
Where bulls and apes in numbers flock to fill their sacred hides.
'Tis true they did not rudely grasp the tidbit they might crave,
Because the vendor unbidden passed what his wise choice had saved.

Gripped on my shoulder safe and tight — pluming my shaggy crown —
Tippoo and I became a sight in that ascetic town.
Confusion grew each step I took, and crushed were my ideals,
Each thing I saw was a backward look, like the crab that rearward
steals.

* Market place.

With a peep into that unique court,* where monkeys reign supreme,
And th' shattered† house of good report of many an ancient dream;
We reached the temple of hidden thought—a visit too long delayed,
Whose archives groaned with lore that taught of wisdom long decayed.

On the shelves of this classic hall were tons of ancient rolls,
Some little known—most not at all—the best in mystic scrolls.
Within this mass of wisdom's sphere, the tree is hard to find,
From whence I plucked the fruit so dear that quite enslaved my mind.

That tree is one of fruitage rare, though very small in growth,
And hidden by giant trees that bear a crop that many loath.
In deep despair, I looked with pain, upon this Sanscrit world,
Convinced no work of human brain could its vast realm unfurl.

The meagre scraps which I had read, were as a single shell,
Tossed from the mighty ocean's bed, where countless others dwell.
Before I lisped my last adieu, to th' hobby of my fate,
I would know from whence the homage grew, for th' yellow-coated ape.

With words polite I asked the Sage, the sponsor at this hall,
If he could point to roll and page where this mammal had its call.
He answered yes, and to my surprise, produced a pack of scrip,
And to relieve my wondering eyes he used a solving lip.

This roll, quoth he, is sacred lore, of Rama's great career,
Who, as Vishnu's child, man's flesh he wore—with eyes divine—a Seer.
This hero, who was th' nation's pride, was sore beset with foes,
His arms were more than once defied by Ceylon, the isle of cloves.

While exiled from his rightful throne, and from an honored life,
The regal outlaw of Ceylon stole Rama's loyal wife.
Stung by the fire of bitter hate, this bandit's realm he sought,
And rescued Sita from her fate, where with rare skill he fought.

‡ 'Twas there the ape came to his aid, and strove with tactics bold,
And by whose skill Ceylon was made a part of India's fold.
Convinced the ape had earned his caste, Tippoo and I withdrew,
And sought our distant camp in haste, filled with reflections new.

*Monkey garden.

† Old observatory.

‡ It is said that Rama sent a monkey to the King of Ceylon, with a message attached to his tail, demanding his surrender, at which the King was so indignant that he tied a mass of inflammable matter to the monkey's tail and set it on fire. The monkey in desperation ran to the top of the royal palace, setting the roof in a blaze. The conflagration spread and burned down the whole city, causing the bandit King's surrender.

If the spot where many gods enshrine make it a heaven on earth,
Then Benares has that claim divine, where Siva had his birth.
But we in Siva's three-fold dowers, a paradox employ,
To bull—and male creative powers—add th' mission to destroy.

Empaled on Siva's three-tined wand are rivals for his throne,
One placed there by Gautama's hand, the other a Moslem dome.
Was Gautama's Buddha Vishnu's child, his gift to incarnate,
In Siva's nature more of th' mild, and less of cruel hate?

With Brahma the great creator, and Vishnu who defends,
Reigns Siva the cruel destroyer, who evil fate portends.
We marvel that this ill-starred God, with *Devee his dreaded wife,
Should sway half India with a rod of terror-stricken life.

By the new-born thoughts of a sleepless night,
With Tippoo on the sentry's beat,
The picture was drawn of glamour too bright,
With veiled distance th' plea for defeat.

My passion for Sanscrit scored a death knell,
When I viewed its mountain of lore,
And my chagrin of soul no mortal can tell,
When with tremor I closed its charmed door.

Sacred Nirvana just fresh from my brain
Was placed on the shelf with regret,
Where, with its loved kin, was now to remain,
While in vain I must strive to forget.

Friends almost forgotten and long in disuse
Again saw the sun's warm rays,
And studies once mocked by silent abuse
Were resumed as in boyhood's days.

Whose pages were marked by scars of neglect,
Each spoke with the air of reproof,
With a fancied frown, as if slow to forget
The cold slights of erratic youth.

* Same as Durga, the popular and most worshipped deity of India, the consort of Siva. She received the name of Durga for having slain a mighty army of giants led by Durga.

Despised Alma Mater's scroll of fame,
I so rudely had dared to spurn,
To my heart appealed with a blush of shame
For the lesson I'd scorned to learn.

Its value spoke with a voice so clear,
I must heed the urgent call,
So I sought the aid of a friend, with fear,
To serve me at old college hall.

To my surprise success and speed
Were rivals in my doubtful scheme,
Which revived the tie of this friend in need,
Who served me in an hour supreme.

With Calcutta's stamp upon the chart,
Wherein Scotland avowed my worth,
As mystic healer, I must brave a start,
Which I spurned in th' land of my birth.

My occult skill in the art to relieve,
Traveled on the wings of the wind,
To me a surprise, so hard to believe
That it shocked my wavering mind.

From a mixer of physic by rote, through mandates of a chief,
I rose to a doctor of note, in season far too brief.
My Scottish friend, unknown to me, had ranked my merits high,
By plaudits, which I did not see, nor know the reason why.

My comrades, who had named me flute, with no regard to voice,
Now bow in silence, and salute, with deference most choice.
My new fledged honors threat to mar the gifts of mother birth,
From feeling I'd been rated far above my actual worth.

In camp there was a young grandee—son of a native King—
Who, for his airs of high degree, was called the scarlet sting.
His words were like a poison-thorn, his gestures weirdly grand,
Despising all, save the "twice-born,"* the rest were shackled hands.

* Only descendants of the original Aryan stock that entered India through the Himalayan passes in earliest history, and conquered the aborigines, are entitled to this distinction.

Aryama, though a rajput true, was loyal to his faith,
Hence spurned religions branded new, as he would a Godless wait.
A Brahma chef must cook his meat, no "*once-born*" hand must stain
The food which he will deign to eat, or dish on which 'tis lain.

This haughty scion of regal line was stricken with remorse,
The cause no comrade could divine, who day by day grew worse.
His change to silent dreamy air, was camp-talk and at mess,
To my surprise he sought my ear, and to me did confess.

His sister — idol of their group, upon her death-bed lay,
While Brahman skill abandoned hope — yes, for a single day.
I told in haste my youthful trend, as one of his belief,
When I was hailed as trusty friend, and from me craved relief.

For a "*once born*" doctor to invade the threshold of the true,
An offense to the gods is made — What should this brother do?
'Tween life and death was now a race, with deep sorrow in th' speed,
And threatened frown from Siva's face, for defiance of th' creed.

A transformation quick and bold was wrought in my attire,
For minutes then outvalued gold, as water conquers fire.
As Brahman of the higher caste, wearing the sacred thread,
I reached a home in frenzied haste, aflame with mortal dread.

If the classic splendor of the East had been mirrored in a dream,
It would have been an empty feast, not so the one now seen.
The gorgeous sight that met my gaze no pen can e'er portray,
Within a palace all ablaze, with rare art without decay.

My half-dazed guide, within this home, the honored Aryama,
Hurried me on from room to room, without a tick's delay.
The secret of my strange disguise was only known to one,
Hence I must look profoundly wise, but hold my foreign tongue.

With silent steps, o'er gems inlaid, strewn with rich velvet thick,
We reached the cot of the stricken maid, more dead than deathly sick.
Her face was drawn by tortuous pain, now calm for want of might,
She strove to move, but all in vain, her mind had taken flight.

That I should not my guise disclose, my lips must silence keep.
Aryama should as speaker pose, and his sister's words repeat.
But Sandala's voice was more than weak — her brother shook his head,
She could not in a whisper speak, nor hear what he had said.

I tested both her heart and wrist, each gave but faint reply,
Yet fruitless aid I couldn't resist, although my patient die.
Aryama's *hope* hung on a thread, too frail for such a name,
He viewed his sister now as dead — my thoughts and his the same.

Sandala's couch superbly made — the gods in ivory wrought,
While th' finest silk-bejeweled brocade — as wrappings stood for naught.
The spacious room, with prospect grand, filled with rich art galore,
All sadly paled before death's hand, could heaven offer more?

The cruel fever had run its race — had all life left her veins?
The stamped reply upon her face: "No gleam of hope remains."
The sorrowing friends looked on askance, my silence they would know,
When at Aryama's knowing glance, I followed him below.

At my request I was assigned a room to be my own
Where undisturbed, my anxious mind might think and act alone.
Could one with such a flickering spark, again be brought to life?
If so 'twould be a magic mark of success to shame the knife.

A hypodermic yet untried, to vitalize the blood,
Was used to start the crimson tide, rather than check its flood.
I watched this test with nervous strain that sent my pulses high,
And could not from a shout refrain when I saw her twinkling eye.

Soon this was followed by a rose upon her cheek of brown,
Then from her shapely pointed nose the moisture trickled down.
Life had indeed been made to hail this maiden back to earth,
Could it but stay with one so frail, 'twould be a second birth.

Her wasted hand with upward wave fell on the spot of red,
Then with her eyes of black she gave a glance around her bed.
In time her mind began to act, and thought its sway revive,
A change when only wisest tact could keep this child alive.

An outburst of ecstatic joy, or tears that would excite,
Might her struggling powers destroy, and cause them certain flight.
A snow white vase from ivory cut, an elephant true though small,
Stood side by side with a golden cup on a table in the hall.

Upon this vase was Indra's form, in gold and silver wrought,
With flying horses in the storm, on clouds with waters fraught.
On signal from Aryama's hand a priest in silence took,
This sacred vase at his command, with it a holy book.

Then bending low, upon his knee, approached Sandala's bed,
And with water from revered Ganges sprinkled the maiden's head.
Sandala's glance toward the priest was full of buoyant hope,
For coming reason was hailed at last by this sad anxious group.

Her blood-tinged lips began to move, as though she wished to speak,
But every struggle more than proved her voice was yet too weak.
A sudden change suffused her face, the watchers looked aghast —
A twinge of horror took the place of joy at dangers past.

A face by nature without scar, a model for a frame,
Which cruel fever had sought to mar by its dry scorching flame,
Distortion now must all affright, in features not her own.
Had some strange vision vexed her sight to drive joy from its throne?

These symptoms new so taxed my brain, and baffled all my skill,
That every effort I must strain my errand of help to fill.
To my surprise a tonic draught of food the nerves to feed,
Brought to her face a feeble laugh, and flush of health with speed.

For hours dead to the world's strife, and all for which it stands,
This child evolved a second life, at a "once born" doctor's hands.
But in this spell of lifeless state she saw the face divine,
And to her brother did relate a story most sublime: —

I saw your kindly figure shrink, as to a midget's size,
And all words to a whisper sink, when a voice cried from the skies.
I beheld, on a cloud aglow, a coach of dazzling hue,
With a thousand horses white as snow framed by the heaven's blue.

I stretched my hands toward this scene, and to its heights would rise,
When a curtain of the deepest green clouded my ravished eyes.
Before this sheet, now changed to black, stood a figure ghastly red
Who in grim-faced anger waved me back, and to me crossly said:—

“Would you defy the moon that’s dark, and orbit* of the sun,
And fly to Brahm in Indra’s ark ere you have penance done.”
This creature seized me by the arm, and bade me to be brave,
Then glancing on, swayed by alarm, I saw a sacred cave.

Two giant figures that vigil kept—nature without a fault—
Looked down with pity as I stepped into that dismal vault.
Linked with terrors of gloom within, like shades of darkest night,
Were many scores of forms akin to demons that affright.

This temple with its gods in rock, of every hideous kind,
Might save the stouter heart from shock, and spare the stronger mind;
Had not a weird vision shed upon these stony forms
A blinding ray of glaring red like threatening clouds of storm.

These waves of light I could excuse, ’twould make all outlines clear.
T’was when each was with life infused, my heart collapsed with fear.
I placed my hand before my sight, to screen this shocking view,
While the scarlet escort gripped me tight, and rushed me swiftly
through.

Of groups we passed to right and left, but two can I recall,
These faced me ere my soul was reft, and they must speak for all.
First Siva, with his demon face, was belching flames of fire,
While wriggling serpents formed a lace that was his neck’s attire.

The ox on which he was enthroned, in frenzy fought the heat,
While Siva in his anger moaned, struggling to hold his seat.
Devee with face cruel in her charms, in lustful form reposed
Within her consort’s sensual arms—her faultless limbs exposed.

Is this the god, within whose power all germs of life are stored?
At whose frown all men must cower, for fate hangs on his word.
But hope rests on the thought that death, through Siva, recreates
A happier creature by his breath, which more than compensates.

* Sun in its southern course—a Brahman superstition.

Though Siva, with his demon face, was fearful to behold,
He counts as nothing in the race, with th' god of sordid gold.
A monster, in both shape and mien, with three distorted heads,
His glaring eyes of sparkling green, would strike a serpent dead.

The carriage of this wretched king—a devil on the seat—
Impressed me as the strangest thing an eye could ever greet.
The steeds were dragons and their elf, revolting to the sight,
While huge Kuvera fanned himself—his skin as black as night.

The grimaces on his triple face, the antics of his whip,
Pictured a horror of this place, I fain would quite forget.
Dazed by the scene and shocked with fear, no sequel could I tell,
When a hissing voice rang in my ear: "Kuvera reigns in hell."

I closed my eyes, no further strain would my weak heart withstand,
And pondered if so black a stain was on each greedy hand.
My thoughts, so rapid and intense, now ceased, as with a charm,
The loathed hand that led me hence, no longer gripped my arm.

The curtain which had barred my gaze from Indra's heavenly team,
Was lost in a celestial blaze, amidst a dazzling scene.
Before me, robed in kingly power, sat Vishnu, god of love,
Over his throne a lotus flower, emblem of life above.

Before him knelt the good and true, in homage most sincere,
Above were sketched the heavens blue, the lone stars bright and clear.
The moon looked down with smiling face, wearing a soma crest,
While the golden sun was wont to chase the heavenly bodies west.

Exchanging dread Palata's den for such a realm of bliss,
Baffled my mind to comprehend a startling change like this.
But wonder now itself surprised when Vishnu, with a frown,
Spurned this base image of the skies—insulting Brahm's great crown.

What was this picture vast and grand, was it within a cave?
'Twas art's device, by human hand designed man's soul to save.
High Vishnu raised his hands divine, and with a withering curse,
He vanished from this mocking shrine, and through the mountain burst.

"Away with such base idol trash!" the voice of Vishnu's knell
Had scarcely ceased ere, with a crash, this dome of beauty fell.
Its crumbling fragments dropped like rain, on the assembled throng,
All struggled to escape in vain — death came to weak and strong.

With wreckage falling fast around, I seemed to mount unharmed,
My feet soon stood on stable ground, as though my life was charmed.
The prospect that before me lay was what perplexed me now,
When I heard a voice in whisper say, you're on *Kanara's** brow.

While viewing nature gay and bright, the vision of a dream,
I looked and saw another sight, 'twas Indra's heavenly team.
Again, I craved the power to fly, and reach the cloud afar;
As quick as thought I soared on high, and gained the golden car.

Transfixed by Indra's look divine, whose glow of holy flame
Beamed on this shrinking face of mine, as he softly asked my name.
When I replied, with trembling voice, I fell prone at his feet,
For did not my glad heart rejoice, that I a god should greet?

"Arise!" said Indra, stooping low, who gently took my hand,
"Why do you thus in homage bow, to one who's only man?
I'm but a herald from the throne, where great Brahm reigns o'er all,
Before whose hallowed face alone you should in worship fall.

"When Vedas taught the Godhead true, in Brahm the great all-wise,
I trod the earth with those who knew the pathway to the skies.
Since then that road to th' holy mount's beset with rocks galore,
And bitter herbs have soured the fount, once sweet with sacred lore.

"My duty's that of humble guide to those of loyal heart,
I to all worthy ears confide a word as they depart;
That I direct the monsoon's way, and pierce the rain-blessed cloud,
Is what deluded man doth say, who vainly speaks too loud.

"Your blissful future will embrace all joys your spirit seeks,
For Brahm will grant with ready grace, quick as thy wish may speak.
Your soul is but your thoughts inspired, with gifts as heaven's dower,
With every base and gross desire stripped of its earthly power.

* This is a description in part of the cave at Kanara.

"Hence the expression of a choice, when fraught with earnest will,
Meets response from the faultless voice, who does at once fulfil.
The same, if for a flight to Mars, the toy house in his clutch,
As to the vast and distant stars, all at his magic touch.

"Such are the mansions he has built, as promised in his call,
To all who renounce their sordid guilt, implanted by the fall,
Express a wish great Brahm to see, and prove my words though few,
And let a thought revert to me, in your home sublime and new."

With these last words a holy flame illum'ed his face of love,
While in his eyes of blue there came a flash as from above.
Towards the earth he stretched his hand, as pity marked his brow,
My vision changed as by a wand, amazement shocked me now.

All India, from east to west, and sea to snow-clad hills,
Was focused like Kanara's crest, and scarred by moral ills.
The sights within Kuvera's hell were scattered far and wide.
On every spot where sunlight fell, there rushed the sin-cursed tide.

The thread that me to earth would bind, was now completely cut,
Indra had shared his godlike mind, my eyes must now look up.
This impulse meant an uttered cry, as Indra wisely taught,
As quick as thought I cleft the sky, and up to heaven was caught.

Inspired thought—the future life—had travelled miles untold,
Had reached a world, where human strife would no more vex the soul.
My earthly anchor encumbered not God's marvel called the mind,
His crucial love had cleansed each blot, and left the dross behind.

Th' celestial zone was all ablaze, as though the eye divine
Was piercing heaven with a gaze, no mortal could define.
And this vast glittering dome was filled with voices loud and sweet,
At which my bewildered soul was thrilled—was this great Brahm to greet?

To learn from whence this anthem came, I scanned the dazzling scene,
When lo! I heard Sandala's name—what could this greeting mean?
If my saluter charmed the ear, as great was my surprise,
When to my side that one drew near, and met my wondering eyes.

Before I could the beauty see, in this my guide portrayed,
Hosts of angels encircled me, in heavenly garb arrayed.
And now upon a world new, which only visions know,
A thousand wonders met my view, that into marvels grow.

Its crystal rivers, and brooks so bright, with priceless pebbles lined,
Whose waters kissed by sacred light, smote me quite beauty-blind,
These gemlike rays sparkled with pride, and mingled, as they blushed,
With matchless flowers that grew beside the streams that onward
rushed.

The aroma from these boughs of grace, for on trees these blossoms grow,
With fragrance filled the highest space, and perfumed the waters' flow.
These beauties mirrored side by side, defy an artist's hand,
Changed by the rippling water's tide, like ever shifting sand.

What! had my early dreams been wrong, of heaven and its guests?
I heard the notes of sweetest song go upward to the blest.
No seraphic or human voice, but of the feathered tribe,
Who made these heavenly bowers their choice, with angels to reside.

Bird nature here is quite reversed, 'tis those of sweetest notes,
Who decked in gayest coats rank first in feathers and warbling throats.
With fragrant flowers that never fade, o'er waters which ever flow,
And fervent songsters divinely made, what joys may we not know?

These thoughts flashed through a mind inspired, with other scenes
forgot,
My angelic hosts were unadmired — white-robed without a spot.
My guide then spoke in words so soft, in language all my own,
Inviting me to mount aloft to Brahm's majestic throne.

Surely the place where Brahm's supreme cannot this heaven outshine,
No visions in the brightest dream could draw pictures more divine.
That saintly face beamed with surprise, and answered with a smile,
This is not heaven but paradise, where God's own rest awhile.

Billions of worlds in Brahm's domain — the mansions of His son —
Shame in beauty this home so plain, where your future's just begun.
For power or bliss, whate'er your choice, expressed by word or thought,
Will meet response in God's own voice, e'en though with marvels
fraught.

Could th' fleshy hand still have its grip — the new life have its flaw?
Alone, I recoiled from a trip to realms so filled with awe.
This angel had divined my fear, and hastened to my side,
Who whispered softly in my ear, "Trust me your future guide."

If in my heart I'd nursed a doubt, it now took sudden flight,
For I had joined the heavenward shout, and mounted with delight.
A thousand thousand, in the throng — each sheltered with his wing,
A novice to that unknown song, *a greeting to the King!*

The flight of thought defies all space, where time's a thing unknown.
Ere I could scan my guide's bright face, to upper heaven we'd flown.
I caught in haste the name Ushas who mine in turn would hear,
When we mingled with a thousand rays, an arch of boundless sphere.

This zone of unnamed colors vast — at first a puzzling maze,
Was into countless figures cast, made heaven with grandeur blaze,
With gorgeous forms and types all new, except to heaven's own,
That filled me with awe to view such wonders of God's home.

When I bestowed a downward look on restless tints en masse,
'Twas not on river and running brook, but on waves of silvery grass.
The colors would an artist craze, their beauties to unfold,
Who'd vainly search this matchless maze, for trace of yellow gold.

Ushas began with ready speech, of all these sights to tell,
That gold had never heaven reached, its vaults were down in hell.
Kuvera as the master hand held fast the golden ark,
Its owners were at his command, in his kingdom drear and dark.

"Does gold, the foster name for graft, afflict alike all climes?
I never dreamed the greedy craft had crossed old India's lines."
Ushas replied, in solemn tone, "'Tis true our land is cursed,
For sowing crops, the vilest grown — we reaped our harvest first.

"But poison seeds are quickly blown unto the bounds of earth,
And ranker grow on foreign ground than where they had their birth.
Kuvera's hand now grips the world within its awful coil,
The Christian west leads in the peril — victims of gilded spoil."

The contact with my guide, though brief, had won me by her touch,
Her breadth of knowledge excelled belief, the globe seemed in her clutch.
Yes, even my surprise she read — no thought could I conceal,
Had I o'erlooked what Indra said, in words of holy zeal?

That a wish though simple, when made known, would with instant
 cession meet,
By God, amongst His chosen own, who would his ear entreat.
That I might Ushas' wisdom share, now burned within my heart,
And e're I could my joy declare, I had an equal part.

We two joined by a mighty throng, as if on concert bent,
Sped o'er the earth a million strong, on heavenly missions sent.
We traced the works of mind and hand, of man from east to west,
Back to the Orient's fertile land, again to reap the best.

Each zone had seen its favored age, each race by heaven blessed,
Each too produced its sunny page, each faded like the rest.
East — the father of all that's good, so long without its share,
Would now resume its fatherhood, and eat the choicest fare.

These shifting events, past and due, flashed on my mind so fast,
That whether they were false or true, were echoes of the past.
These startling concepts shared by both were as two minds in one,
No vapors of the human brain, but whispers from God's throne.

Strange visions came, and visions fled, quicker than keenest thought,
Yet Ushas spoke e'er each had sped, what heaven's voice had taught.
Amazed to have my sight agree exactly with my guide.
Why should I, when 'twas God's decree, His knowledge to confide?

Assured in answer to our call, that universal love
Was dawning, as before the fall, that rules in realms above.
A last unfolding now I craved, to solve the thousand creeds,
And learn the true road of the saved — greatest of human needs.

The voice in solemn whispers came, That path is always clear,
To those who honor th' all-wise name, and His holy word revere.
No matter by what title known: Jehovah, Brahm, Allah,
There's but one God, and but one throne, whatever man may say.

His word of love has reached all ears, spoken in every tongue,
To east and west, in all the years, since human life begun.
His messengers to every zone, have warned man of his fate,
Too many chose Kuvera's throne, and scorned the wicket gate.

But men endued with fertile minds, as varied as earth's flowers,
Framed novel faiths of equal kinds, all built on Godlike powers.
This pleasing field of colors bright, each with its fragrance blessed,
Charmed more the great Creator's sight, than sameness of the best.

Kuvera scanned with eye of hate, this garden of the pure,
And scattered tares early and late, to make destruction sure.
He stung the choicest plants that bloomed upon this holy field,
'Till one by one the best were doomed, to his blighting hand to yield.

The true and purest, white as snow, has not escaped his touch,
But has received a withering blow, whose life gasps in his clutch.
The snow-decked lily of the cross, planted by God's own son,
He fain would kill at any cost, that he the earth might own.

United with Kuvera's band in this colossal war,
Is th' listless foeman's feeble hand, more dangerous by far.
The friends of Christ instead of steel, now use the wooden sword,
Who need as much, Mohammed's zeal as Mohammed needs their word.

Awake! Awake! Awake! Awake! Cried the angelic throng,
As they the drowsy earth forsake, chanting their warning song.
Their ceaseless vigil is to keep their eye on faithless man,
Who found in truth God's church asleep, and Kuvera in command.

If, as 'tis said, the darkest sky is just before the dawn,
The voice that whispered from on high confirms this startling song.
That th' hour to cleanse this Godless ball, and stem the vicious flow,
Is near meridian, on God's dial, soon He will strike the blow.

Away from earth a billion miles, again we greet the blest,
Where tears and frowns are changed to smiles — sorrows to peace and
rest.
Midst light that dazzles th' boundless sky, with creations most divine,
Traced in colors no human eye can view, and then define.

One look, and this vast scene was lost—an object red as blood
Dwarfed all others—'twas a cross; near it five figures stood.
Each head was by a halo crowned, with letters traced in green,
The names that in God's roll are found, who to the earth have been.

A cloud composed of tints galore, now veiled the cross of red,
The five were hid, save he who wore a crown upon his head.
A voice came from this sacred cloud, the speaker quite unseen,
So startling were the words and loud, I craved what it could mean?

At once my wish had its reward, for He who wore the crown,
Replied, The host must be prepared, earth's idols to pull down.
The power that won man's heart, so cold, when Christ was flesh and
blood,
Must its field extend a thousand fold, and stay the evil flood.

A transformation quick as light could flit through heaven's space,
Was made to daze the keenest sight, and mock the mind to trace.
The countless figures changed their hues—a mirage of unrest,
While mingling angels adorned th' views, as Brahm's most favored
guests.

They sang an anthem strange and weird, and in such angry airs,
That, in contrast with what I had heard, it palled upon my ears.
The answer to my earnest quest to know its true portent,
Was instant, and quite set at rest; earth's fate was what it meant.

A giant throne now filled all space, veiled by a dazzling screen,
To hide from sight the hallowed face, no creature's eye had seen.
A thundering voice the heavens rent, that mortal can't repeat,
God's army was on action bent, Kuvera to defeat.

This august voice had changed the view, the host of heaven was massed,
And to a mighty army grew, as before th' throne it passed.
Its form mere words cannot convey, save by four captains led,
Those at the cross would plan the fray, with Christ the master head.

O tell me of my brother's fate! and India my home,
Hear me before it is too late! spare both from threatened doom.
These pangs inspired by ardent fear, addressed to Brahm on high,
With favor reached the all-wise ear, who whispered this reply:

Away to thy native earth, and seek thy brother's side,
And tell him of thy second birth, and what may him betide.
Proclaim abroad that earthly toys, are but base dross to sell,
All heaven's vast and sweetest joys, for black Kuvera's hell.

This message brother to thee is brought, that our world may know,
That God is wherever sought, in heaven or earth below.
Now Brahm has called thy friend to preach this truth to every heart,
This story will Sandala teach, as a loyal sister's part.



